

Supervisor Lesko Announces Animal Shelter's First Annual All-American Shelter Dog Obedience Graduation Ceremony on June 11

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Pictured from left to right are Cooper, Gavin, and Selena, three of the dogs who participated in the All American Shelter Dog Obedience program

at the Brookhaven Town Animal Shelter and Adoption Center and are ready to be adopted into a loving family

Farmingville, NY - Supervisor Mark Lesko has announced that The Town of Brookhaven Animal Shelter will hold its First Annual All American Shelter Dog Obedience Graduation Ceremony on Saturday, June 11 at 11:00 am. Volunteers Mike Gould from Hounds Town and Tuncay Adem from Canine Counsel worked at the shelter on seven weekends and trained 19 Animal Shelter dogs. Five of the 19 original dogs in the program have already been adopted. The 14 remaining dogs will "graduate" on June 11.

"The fourteen dogs who are graduating from obedience school on June 11 are ready to be loving companions and I encourage residents to come to their graduation and bring one home," said Supervisor Mark Lesko, "I thank the volunteers who contributed their time and talents to train the dogs. This is another creative program launched by Animal Shelter Director Dori Scofield to increase adoptions."

Councilwoman Jane Bonner, "It's so great how people at the shelter care so much about the animals. The commitment of our volunteers who give up their own free time to work with animals so others can enjoy them is truly a wonderful thing."

Dori Scofield, Director of the Shelter, said, "I am so grateful to the trainers, Mike and Tuncay, and all the volunteers who worked with the dogs for many weeks to show everyone that American Shelter Dogs can be obedient, shining stars."

Anyone who would like to adopt one of the graduates of the All American Shelter Dog Obedience training program should attend the June 11 event or call 631-286-4049. The shelter will waive the normal fee for any of the program dogs that are adopted.

The Town is also holding a Free Rabies Clinic on June 4, which will take place between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in the parking lot of Brookhaven Town Hall, located at 1 Independence Hill in Farmingville. The Brookhaven Animal Shelter is organizing this event with the support of the Suffolk County Health Department. There is a limited quantity of 1,000 free rabies vaccinations and they will be given on a first come, first serve basis. In order for pets to receive the vaccination, dogs must be on a leash and cats or ferrets must be in pet carriers. Residents can also take advantage of affordable veterinary care at this event. The Animal Shelter will be offering low-cost booster shots and micro-chipping of pets. Payment can only be made in cash.

The Brookhaven Animal Shelter has been very progressive in launching programs that will increase adoption rates and pet retention and find homes for the many Pit Bulls and Pit Mixes in the Animal Shelter. The Brookhaven Bully Alliance (BBA), which was announced earlier this year, encourages other animal rescues to adopt Pit Bulls from the Brookhaven animal shelter and find loving homes for them. Every shelter dog that enters the BBA program is

professionally evaluated, spayed or neutered, vaccinated and micro-chipped. \$250 goes to each participating organization for the care of the animal.

The Town of Brookhaven Animal Shelter has also recently introduced "Spay it Forward", a program that offers incentives to get animals spayed and neutered. This new program is presently concentrating on the ever-growing Pit Bull population in our township. For every Pit Bull that a resident gets spayed or neutered, the owner will receive a voucher to help another needy Pit Bull to receive the same services. The goal of this program is to help curb over-population and increase education and awareness about adopting Pit Bulls. The Animal Shelter is also providing free micro-chipping, vaccines, heartworm testing, and collars for anyone who gets their Pit Bull spayed or neutered.

Pit Bulls and Pit Mixes make up 95% of the approximately 200 dogs at the Brookhaven Animal Shelter.

The Town does not use taxpayer dollars to fund Spay it Forward or the Brookhaven Bully Alliance- the funds to pay participating organizations are provided by the Help the Animals Fund. The Help the Animals Fund is currently accepting donations and will be sponsoring various fundraising events to support this program and others. Residents who would like to sponsor one of the shelter's Pit Bulls can donate by visiting www.brookhaven.org/animalshelter and clicking the Help the Animals Fund link.

The Animal Shelter is located at 300 Horseblock Road in Brookhaven, NY and is open from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. For more information on the Brookhaven Animal Shelter, visit www.brookhaven.org/animalshelter.

Division of Public Information * Office of the Supervisor

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